

Dear Legislators,

I write to ask you to please support HB 5285, which includes the important proposition to require CT schools to provide climate change instruction as part of the science curriculum. For their own awareness and safety, students need to understand the threat that climate change poses to our Earth and the need to transition from fossil fuels to clean, renewable energy. They need to recognize that climate change exacerbates all injustices-social, racial, economic, and especially, environmental injustice. Because the youth of today will inherit a planet with environmental problems that have been created over the last 60+ years, they need to learn how to be advocates for clean air and water, for animal species, forests, oceans, and those peoples ravaged by the worst effects of climate change. By learning about climate change early, they may become interested in studying environmental science in college and in having a science career related to controlling carbon emissions, or in environmental justice, or in a trade related to clean, renewable energy or in saving species. We need to be preparing students for these career areas because of the environmental crises already happening around our world and the looming threat of climate change and its deleterious effects, from floods to raging fires to rising seas to species extinction to contagious viruses, droughts, food insecurity, and mass migration. A good climate change curriculum would teach students about the intersectionality of all of these problems.

The climate change bill has been championed for years by several CT legislators, but the imminent threats that climate change poses now make it imperative to get a mandated law across the finish line. Please pass this bill quickly this Session!

Thank you very much for the opportunity to offer testimony on this important bill. As an educator and an advocate for environmental justice, I have waited a long time to see this mandated climate change education become a reality in CT schools.

With gratitude for all the hard work you do in our CT Legislature, Rev. Nancy Leckerling

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"There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of Nature-the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter." --Rachel Carson